



County of San Luis Obispo, California

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: General Services Agency / Curtis Black

SUBJECT: Consider Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo (LCSLO) request for \$1,000,000 of Park Public Facility Fee (PPFF) funding to assist in the purchase of Pismo Preserve.

DATE: 4/24/2014

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Commission review this report and determine if \$1,000,000 or some other amount, if any, is an appropriate amount of Park Public Facility Fee funding to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to be designated for acquisition of the property known as the Pismo Preserve.

Discussion:

The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County LCSLO is a local non-profit organization that has served our county for 25 years. They are dedicated people working together as staff and volunteers to set aside local lands for wildlife, recreation, farming, and ranching. Since 1984 the LCSLO has conserved over 14,700 acres of open space and farm lands. Their goal is to help prevent poorly planned development, protect drinking water sources, restore wildlife habitat and promote family farmlands and ranches. Their Mission is: "Through voluntary and collaborative measures, The Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County works to permanently protect and enhance lands having important scenic, agricultural, habitat and cultural values for the benefit of people and wildlife."

In addition to conservation, since 1996, LCSLO has taken on the task of restoring the Octagon barn on Higuera Street just south of the San Luis Obispo city limits. The barn is a rare and iconic landmark unique to San Luis Obispo County, the Octagon Barn was on the verge of collapse when The Land Conservancy stepped in to save the building and revitalize the site for community benefit. Today, thanks to many dedicated volunteers and generous donors, The Land Conservancy has restored the historic Octagon Barn and its future parking area will serve as a trailhead for the Bob Jones Pathway. From 1984 through to date, the LCSLO has received generous community support both in addressing needs of open space preservation and in restoration of the Octagon Barn.

Proposed Project:

Recently the Land Conservancy entered into a land purchase agreement to secure a 900-acre private ranch in San Luis Obispo County north of Pismo Beach (see attached site map) in an effort to create the Pismo Preserve. This proposed preserve would be open to the public as early as Summer 2015 for

outdoor recreation opportunities including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, bird watching and exploring the flora and fauna of the area.

LCSLO sees this property as essential in that availability of open space encourages active lifestyles and can help address the health crisis facing the United States. "By providing easy access to outdoor recreation experiences, The Land Conservancy supports healthy active lifestyles which helps combat our nation's health crisis," says Kaila Dettman, Executive Director, "If we are successful, this project will provide a major boost to the local economy by attracting tourists and new home buyers. And of course the protection of scenic beauty, wildlife, and clean water is essential for maintaining a high quality of life."

The project purchase is contingent upon fund raising and LCSLO is seeking partners to fund the purchase of Pismo Preserve. To successfully create the proposed Pismo Preserve, The Land Conservancy must raise \$11.7 million by July 2014. \$8 million has been committed by State agencies (California Coastal Conservancy and California Wildlife Conservation Fund). Regional and local funding sources must provide the remaining funding, leaving the project's future in the hands of the community.

On April 1, 2014 the LCSLO provided the attached written request for funding including the project details and costs. The LCSLO is seeking \$1,000,000 of Park Public Facility Fee (PPFF) funds to assist in the purchase of Pismo Preserve.

Ongoing Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance of this open space is a topic as important as its purchase and construction. Should a park be constructed it is critical to provide adequate operational funding to maintain a safe, usable and attractive park. LCSLO has provided a strong commitment to maintain this park and provide both administrative and public access programming support at no cost to the County beyond the purchase investment.

Use of PPFF Funds

Park Public Facility Fee (PPFF) funds are collected through residential development and are placed into one countywide fund. A summary of PPFF accounts as of March 31, 2014 is found in Attachment C and notes that \$2,516,780 is available as undesignated PPFF funds.

County Counsel has reviewed Title 18 - Public Facility Fees Ordinance and the related Public Facility Fee Financing Plan and finds that the amendment to Chapter 3.3 Park Facilities Inventory of the Public Facility Fee Financing Plan, through a Board resolution, would enable the use of PPFF funds for this project.

It is not unusual for County Parks to provide PPFF funds to other agencies for purchase of land and/or development of recreational facilities for public good. Recent dedications of PPFF funds included: construction of Jack Ready Imagination Park; landscape construction at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Gardens and Wild Cherry Canyon acquisition. While the Wild Cherry Canyon purchase was not completed as planned, all of the PPFF funds were returned to the County with accrued interest as well.

High Priority Park Projects

Below is a list of current High Priority projects that are eligible for PPFF funding. It should be noted that the funds available as shown on Attachment C, are not adequate to fund all of the high priority projects. Therefore, it is necessary to review these projects, focus funding on those that best meet community needs and projects that can be completed as planned. The High Priority projects are ranked below, from highest priority to lowest priority, based on the criteria, contained in the Parks and Recreation Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan. According to these criteria, Purchase of Pismo Preserve ranked number 14 of 18 projects eligible for PPFF funding as listed below.

Priority Projects eligible for PPFF

Project Title	BOS District	Project Description	Score Per PRE Criteria	Ranking
Bob Jones Pathway – SLO to Ontario Road	3	Multi-use class I pathway from Octagon Barn to Ontario Road- EIR in process- construction partially funded w/ PFF and Grants	33.3	1
Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector	2	Multi-use class I pathway and class III bike route between Morro Bay and Cayucos (California Coastal Trail)- in the permitting process, plans, specifications and estimates funded with grants, grant application submitted for construction	31.3	2
San Miguel Community Park Expansion	1	Expand park by removing K St. & expanding to adjacent parcel. Improvements include: new ball field; and repair of existing facilities - K St. mitigation partially grant and PFF funded, additional funding needed for improvements	31	3
Nipomo Community Park Master Plan	4	Master Plan adoption and EIR certification planned for 2012. PFF Funds allocated for playground replacement. Master plan improvements include: restrooms; picnic areas; sports; fields; trails; etc.- unfunded	30	4
Templeton to Atascadero Connector	1 & 5	Multi-use trail connecting Templeton and Atascadero- Design funded by grant, construction unfunded	29.3	5

Cave Landing Trail and Improvements	3	Multi-use trail connecting Pismo Beach to Avila Beach, parking lot improvements, and beach access to pirates cove- - in the permit process, construction fully grant funded	28	6
Avila to Harford Pier Pathway	3	Multi-use class I pathway between Avila Beach and Harford Pier (California Coastal Trail) -design and permits funded with grant funds, construction partially grant funded	27.7	7
Santa Margarita to Garden Farm Connector	5	Multi-use class I pathway connecting Santa Margarita and Garden Farm-easement to be donated, remaining phases unfunded	26	8
Salinas River Corridor AnzaTrail	1	Plan for multi-use trail funded with grant. Remaining phases, including construction, unfunded	25	9
Jack Ready Park	4	Assist Jack's Helping Hand with new park development for people with special needs. Improvements include: playground; parking; picnic areas; equestrian facilities; and trails - Jack's Helping Hand has funded park design and access improvements and is striving to raise funds for construction - partially PFF funded	23.3	10 (tie)
Biddle Park Master Plan	4	Master Plan adoption and environmental review completion planned for 2012. PFF funds allocated for playground replacement. Master plan improvements include: parking; restrooms; picnic areas; ball fields; playgrounds; trails; etc.- unfunded	23.3	10 (tie)
Dana Adobe Park	4	Acquisition and development of a new park adjacent to the Dana Adobe, in Nipomo. Improvements include: community center; trails; picnic areas;; playgrounds; and interpretive garden - unfunded	23	12
Norma Rose Park Development	2	New park in Cayucos. Improvements include: parking; playground; basketball court; skate park- partially funded with PFF	22	13
Pismo Preserve Purchase	3	Assist with the Land Conservancy's purchase of approximately 900-acres for public open space and passive outdoor recreation. The Land Conservancy is requesting \$1 million from County Parks to assist with the \$12 million project costs.	20.7	14

North Coast Coastal Trail	2	Plan for multi-use trail funded through grant. Remaining phases, including construction, unfunded	20	15
SLO Botanical Garden Improvements	2	Assist the SLO Botanical Garden with the improvements to the garden and facilities. Improvements include: paving; and amphitheater construction- PFF funded	19.7	16
San Juan Bautista De Anza Trail Property Acquisition in Edna	3	Acquisition of parcels that may become part of the multi-use class I pathway segment between Pismo Beach and San Luis Obispo - unfunded	17.7	17
Pismo Beach to Bob Jones Trail Connector	3	Multi-use class one pathway connecting Pismo Beach to Bob Jones trail - unfunded	11.3	18

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

On February 27, 2014 the County Parks and Recreation Commission placed “Assist in Purchase of Pismo Preserve” onto the High Priority Projects list and endorsed the Purchase of Pismo Preserve project as worthy of local and regional agencies’ support.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Financial impacts would vary by the amount of PPFF funding determined appropriate by the Board of Supervisors.

As noted on the attached PPFF funding detail, the March 31, 2014 balance of undesignated PPFF funds is \$2,516,780. If the requested \$1,000,000 of PPFF funds is provided there would be \$1,516,780 of undesignated PPFF funds remaining.

RESULTS

Providing funds to assist in the purchase of Pismo Preserve would help to provide unique parklands suitable for public hiking and biking, and passive recreation with no ongoing costs to the County. Acquisition of the Pismo Preserve and its subsequent opening to public recreational use would help provide a healthy and livable community.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. LCSLO Request for Funding
- B. Site Map
- C. Park Public Facility Fee Funds Detail